

EDITOR'S NOTE

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The international system is characterized by unequal power relations. The power of a state is, therefore, measured by its capacity to define and execute decisive politics in both the economic and military fields. The shift in strategic rivalries that characterized the post-Cold War has been altering the global outlook in successive stages that clearly demonstrate the displacement/emergence of power poles. From the “structural programs” offered by the western financial organisms in the 90s to the restructuring of the African Union, in the 2000s, the African continent moved from a “lost” decade to a new phase in which the idea of development became, once again, the most fundamental demand. Certainly, the overcoming of neocolonialism and the search for autonomy and new partners will not spare Africa from a Euro-American reaction, and neither from the power struggles of the local elites.

However, even though destabilizing actions challenge the capabilities of African states, the political maturing is a reality. In this number of the Brazilian Journal of African Studies, the focus of the discussion proposed by the researchers are exactly the political challenges faced by the African states, elites and societies. In the fourth number of the BJAS, we present ten papers and two book reviews from international researchers.

Sharkdam Wapmuk and Oluwatooni Akinkwotu examine, from a historical perspective, Africa in the world relations, from slavery to colonialism. The authors also discuss the condition of the African states in the global politics and political economy, in the international organizations – mainly the UN – and the African relations with the traditional and emerging economic powers in the paper *The dynamics of Africa in world affairs: from Afro-pessimism to Afro-optimism?*. The CPLP as a Brazil's mechanism of acting in the South Atlantic: the increase of cooperation, the challenges and the possibilities of leadership is discussed by Kamilla Raquel Rizzi, Isabella Cruzichi da Silva. The authors evaluate that the Community of Portuguese Language

Countries (CPLP), in its 21 years of existence, evolved, progressively, from a multilateral forum of socio-political-diplomatic concertation to a geostrategic mechanism focused on the South Atlantic, extending its operations to other fields, such as regional security and defense.

The researcher Hetalben Haribhai Patel, in *Opportunities and challenges for Mozambique from the Indian expansion in Africa*, analyses the Indian interests in its expansion towards the African countries, especially Mozambique. The rapprochement between India and Mozambique, according to the author, resulted in the increase of economic relations, more concretely in the increase of the volume of commerce and foreign direct investment, including the transferring of technology and know-how to Mozambique, elements that present both opportunities and challenges to the young African state. In *Comparative analysis of political competition effectiveness in Brazil and in Mozambique (1990-2014)*, Fidel Terenciano examines the structure of the party system and the effectiveness of the political competition in Brazil and in Mozambique, evidencing the profiles and operation of the political parties in both countries.

Alexandre António Timbane and João Gil Vicente, in the paper *Public and Language Policies: strategies and challenges in combating social inequalities in Mozambique* discusses the influence of the public and language policies in the life of the Mozambicans and analyses the possible paths to a politics that answers to the interests of the population. To the author, there is a need to involve the society in the decision making process and in the resolution of the social issues, because even though Portuguese is the official language, it at the same time segregates the non-alphabetized majority of the population. In the sequence, Henry Kam Kah analyses, in *Ritual use of currency in Laimbwe history, Cameroon*, the way in which the arrival of Europeans to Cameroon, in the 14th century, and the introduction of western currency as an exchange standard and measure of value, went on to replace other native currencies. This new relationship, to the author, produced a deep impact in the initiation rituals of the Cameroonian societies, including the Laimbwe, of the northwest region.

The four last papers discuss themes relative to Nigeria. Mike Omilusi, in the paper *From Convenient Hibernation to Circumstantial Desperation: Hate Speech, Party Political Communication and the Nigeria's 2015 General Elections* evaluates that up until the eve of the general elections of 2015, many political parties that conveniently “hibernated” for the greatest part of its existence, either for a lack of adequate organizational structure of support base, or for their uncoordinated programs, or, still, for being registered because of pecuniary gains, suddenly began to show in the political space. According to the analyst, the general elections of 2015 offered, therefore, a unique

context to question the place of the party's political communication in an emerging democracy and, specifically, how the hate campaigns between the competing political candidates/parties could generate violence, and, unless tamed, derail the democratic consolidation. Jolaade Omede and Arinze Ngwube, on their turn, discuss the effect of corruption rooted in the political and economic spheres. To the authors, in *Mainstreaming Corruption Poverty and Development in Nigeria*, corruption suffocates the economic growths, reduces the economic efficiency and the development, despite the big aggregate of resources in the country.

Finally, Dauda Ishaya Suntai and Tordue Simon Targema, anchored by the Social Responsibility Theory, question until which point do the new media platforms liberalize the country's political communication process, beyond the opportunities and threats they hold to the democratic consolidation. The discussion is present in the paper *New Media and Democracy in Nigeria: an Appraisal of the Opportunities and Threats in the Terrain*. Also in this theme, Aondover Eric Msughter, in *Peace Journalism Practice and Development in the Northeast of Nigeria: Focus Group Discussion with Some Members of NTA Correspondents' Damaturu, Yobe State*, analyzes, based on discussions, the role of media organizations and how these should seek the most appropriate way to report the news, contributing to the promotion of peace in the country, especially in northwest Nigeria, where the cases of ethnic, religious and political conflicts destabilize the region.

This issue also includes two book reviews. Vladimir Shubin presents to the readers of the BJAS the works of Andrew Urnov, *USA – Africa: the Policy of President B. Obama Administration. 2009 – 2014* and *USA – Africa: the Policy of President B. Obama Administration. 2015 – 2016. Chronicle of Events*. A great Russian diplomat and scholar, Urnov, graduated by the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, researches the foreign policy of the United States since his days as a student. From 1966, he became secretary, head of division and finally deputy head of the International Department of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, being the one responsible for Moscow's political link to the African countries – particularly with the national liberation movements – for almost a quarter of a century. Later, he was the first Soviet/Russian ambassador sent to Namibia. When he retired from the diplomatic services, he became a Leading, then Chief Researcher, in the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Hélder Pires Amâncio, on his turn, collaborates with a review of the work of the Mozambican Alcinda Honwana, titled *O tempo da juventude: emprego, política e mudanças sociais em África*. The book is the result of researches carried out in four African countries, namely Mozambique, South Africa, Tunisia and Senegal, from 2008 to 2011. Its analysis object are the diverse

experiences of the youth (particularly Africans) in the way they deal with issues (such as unemployment, marginalization, lack of civil rights and stable means of subsistence, as well as social inequalities) generated by the flaws of neoliberal policies, bad governance and political crisis in Africa.

The BJAS publishes a bilingual electronic and printed version (Portuguese and English). We hope thus for the contribution of colleagues in Brazil and abroad, with whom we intend to establish bonds to deepen our mutual knowledge and build a Southern vision regarding the African continent and the relations with it.

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